



58

# Against All Odds

*The doctors told him he had a 10% chance for survival.* By Charles Peebles

Most twenty-one-year olds are excited about going to the bar for the first time, being independent and finally out on their own. Johnny Quinn was no different. He was young and excited about being done with school—ready to enter the real world. However, Johnny’s world came to a drastic halt. After being paralyzed from a motorcycle accident in 1998, John suddenly had more important things to worry about than looking for a job and finding money to go out to the bar every weekend. Johnny Quinn was riding his motorcycle on his lunch break. He had been out the day before on his motorcycle just riding around for fun and not being particularly careful. Now that he was on a time constraint because of his lunch schedule, John wasn’t out on a crazy joyride, but rather simply trying to get from point A to point B. The next thing John knew he was in the hospital. He had slammed into the side of a minivan and had broken two femurs, an arm, a jaw, and injured his head and spinal cord. The spinal cord injury left him paralyzed from the waist down and John didn’t remember any of it.

After being told by his doctors that he had a ten percent chance of survival, Quinn beat the odds and pulled through. However, it wasn’t easy. After being in an intensive care unit for one month, and a rehab facility for two months where he was taught how to care for himself, John was finally able to go home. For the first year at home Quinn felt depressed and didn’t do much. He was extremely despondent at first, but a great family and network of friends really helped. Even though Quinn wasn’t particularly motivated to do much of anything, he eventually made the decision that he couldn’t spend the rest of his life being depressed and hanging around the house.

Both of his brothers were always into sports and were personal trainers. John

had gone to the gym occasionally before his accident but it was never something to which he was entirely devoted. He decided to hit up the gym with his brothers to try to get some of his strength and weight back that he had lost over the past year while recovering. The owner of the gym,



*Johnny Quinn was just a typical twenty one-year-old when his life was altered forever during a quick spin over his lunch break.*

and bodybuilder, Robert Caltabiano, introduced himself to Quinn and offered to help him out any way that he could.

John began training with Caltabiano and after awhile began to feel normal again. After working out for nearly two years,

Caltabiano encouraged Quinn to consider getting into bodybuilding. He showed John magazines with stories devoted to wheelchair bodybuilding. A bit hesitant at first, Quinn decided to give wheelchair bodybuilding a shot.

Quinn entered his first competition in 2002. To train for the event, he worked out religiously and drastically changed his diet. Remarkably, John won first place in his division in the 2002 NPC Junior National Wheelchair Championship. He continued to train and found much success in the world of bodybuilding. Life was finally starting to turn around and Quinn no longer felt defined by his paralysis. However, John was dealt another drastic blow in November 2004 when he was involved in yet another a serious crash. Quinn, who was not wearing a seatbelt, wrecked his car into a pole and landed himself back in intensive care with two broken ankles, facial fractures, and a broken jaw for the second time. He was forced to miss the 2004 Nationals because of his numerous injuries.

Angry and frustrated, Quinn once again turned his attention to God. "By giving God first place in my life, everything else fell into place," said Quinn. Not only did I look to Him for strength to recover from a serious automobile accident for a second time, but also for help in dealing with paralysis on a daily basis. Eventually Quinn healed and he began to turn his attention towards the 2005 Nationals, where he went on to place second in the lightweight division in the NPC Junior National Championships.

Although it was technically the off-season for Quinn after the 2005 Junior Nationals, he quickly turned his attention to the 2006 National competition. Typically, training begins sixteen weeks before a competition and involves a rigorous diet and exercise routine. Taking in extra calories is essential for bodybuilders and Quinn accomplishes this by eating six meals a day, which consist of plenty of protein and amino acids. Extra time in the gym is also imperative. Because his paralysis starts in the middle of his torso, John has to give special attention to working his abdominal muscles. He utilizes a muscle stimulator which is effective in helping him get some definition in this area. John's hard work paid off when he placed second in the light-heavyweight division in the 2006 Wheelchair Nationals.

It has been five years since Quinn began training and he has won numerous titles in various competitions. However, John's new goal was to win the overall title in the 20 2007 competition. After training for a year, he traveled to New Orleans in July for the National Competition. He achieved his goal by winning top honors by not only winning first place in the light-heavyweight division, but also by placing first in the men's overall competition. Johnny Quinn was just a typical twenty-one year old when his life was altered forever during a quick spin over his lunch break. While it was certainly rough getting used to being confined to a wheelchair, Quinn made the choice to not spend his life feeling sorry for himself. Eating properly and working out regularly were necessities in becoming the 2007 Champion. However, Quinn

believes he wouldn't have achieved any success if it hadn't been for his strong belief in God. "My faith in God has truly brought me to where I am today."



Charles Peebles, NSCA-CPT, NCTMB, whose articles have appeared in numerous fitness and bodybuilding magazines, is a well-known proponent for girls' and women's physical advancement ([www.teamvalkyries.org](http://www.teamvalkyries.org)). In addition to being a Nationally-Certified Personal Trainer, he is a Nationally-Certified Massage Therapist ([www.yourlocalpersonaltrainer.net](http://www.yourlocalpersonaltrainer.net)). Contact him at [Charles@PhillyFitMagazine.com](mailto:Charles@PhillyFitMagazine.com)

## "ME" TIME \* MONEY\$ \* MUSTANG\$ Got your attention?

- Have fun de-stressing people both in homes and offices.
- Awesome botanical product line
- Flex hours/great \$\$\$/company car
- Great addition for massage therapists
- Will train you.

**Call today for details on becoming a Spa Specialist with BeautiControl Spa Escapes or to set up YOUR Spa Escape!**

**CALL CINDY AT 215-699-6308 OR [imageonthego@comcast.net](mailto:imageonthego@comcast.net)**

## Safe Day Studio

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu "Team Tatu"  
Mixed Martial Arts (MMA)  
Kid's Karate  
Public/Private Safety Seminars  
Military/Law Enforcement/Security  
Private Instruction  
Executive/Celebrity Protection  
Women's Self-Defense

"Mr. Mike" Andrus  
Owner/Chief Instructor

215.370.1650

[www.ustaysafe.com](http://www.ustaysafe.com)

[info@ustaysafe.com](mailto:info@ustaysafe.com)

Located At:

Body Dynamics  
Fitness Center  
1810 County Line Rd.  
Huntington Valley,  
PA 19006

